

Definitions

Calendar Year: The year beginning January 1st, and ending December 31st.

Cause Code: The code that corresponds to the cause of injury or occupational disease. The IAIABC (International Association of Industrial Accident Boards and Commissions) codes for cause are divided into nine categories. The ninth category, “All Other Claims, NOC (Not Otherwise Classified)”, was created to account for the records that did not have a cause code entered.

Burn or Exposure: Includes hot or cold objects, chemical, fire, welding, scalds, temperature exposure, and radiation.

Caught in or Between: Includes caught in or between machinery, an object being handled, and miscellaneous objects such as earth slides or collapsing buildings.

Puncture or Cut: Includes punctures, cuts, or scrapes as a result of broken glass, hand tools, utensils, power tools, appliances, or guns.

Fall, Slip, Trip: Includes falling from a different level or on the same level, ladder or scaffolding falls, slipping on liquid or grease, ice or snow slips and falls into openings.

Vehicle Related: Includes collisions with another vehicle or fixed object, rollovers, rough riding, and airplane, water vehicle or rail vehicle crashes.

Strain, Jump or Lift: Includes jumping, twisting, holding or carrying objects, lifting, pushing, pulling, reaching, overexertion, and throwing.

Hit Against or Step on Object: Includes moving machine parts, objects being lifted, sanding, or scraping operations, stationary objects, and stepping on sharp objects.

Struck by Object: Includes falling or flying objects, hand tools or machines in use, co-workers, or patients, motor vehicles, moving machine parts and objects handled by others.

All Other Claims, NOC: Includes animal and insect bites, explosions, foreign body in eye, injury or stress from an assault, and causes that occur over a period of time.

Absorption, injection or inhalation not otherwise classified; includes all records where cause was not reported on the First Report of Injury or where the code could not be converted to IAIABC codes.

Employment Relations Division (ERD): The State of Montana’s regulatory agency for workers’ compensation. This division is part of the Department of Labor and Industry.

Fiscal Year: The State of Montana’s fiscal year, beginning July 1, and ending June 30 of the following year.

First Report of Injury (FROI): The initial report designed to notify parties of the occurrence of an injury or illness; contains basic claim information regarding the who, what and how of an occupational injury or illness.

Indemnity Payments: Payments made by the insurer to the injured worker to compensate for the loss of wages resulting from an injury or occupational disease.

International Association of Industrial Accident Boards and Commissions (IAIABC): An organization of workers’ compensation specialists including government officials and regulators, business and labor leaders, medical providers, law firms, insurance carriers, and

rehabilitation and safety experts. Through efforts that began independently, working groups worked jointly to recommend the collection of certain basic data elements in order to understand and monitor developments in the workers compensation arena. Standards have been developed for communicating data electronically through Electronic Data Interchange (EDI).

Nature Code: The code that corresponds to the nature of the injury or occupational disease. The IAIABC codes for nature are divided into eight categories. A ninth category “All Other Claims, NOC”, was created to account for the records that did not have a nature code entered.

Sprain or Rupture: Includes strains, dislocations, hernias, organ ruptures, and trauma to joints or muscles.

Bruise or Swelling: Includes contusions, broken blood vessels, and inflammation.

Cut or Abrasion: Includes slivers, lodged small objects, open wounds, scrapes, and needle sticks.

Fracture: Includes any breaking of a bone.

Occupational Disease: Includes repetitive motion, loss of hearing or sight, respiratory conditions, poisoning, mental disorders, radiation, heart disease, cancer, AIDS, carpal tunnel, and any disease resulting from work related experiences.

Amputation: Includes loss of a limb that involves bone, loss of part of an organ, enucleation, or severance of a body part.

Burn or Exposure: Includes electrical shocks, chemical burns, temperature extremes, freezing, sunburns, heat stroke, and lightning.

Multiple Injuries

All Other Claims, NOC: Includes asphyxiation, loss of circulation, infection, concussion, heart problems, vision loss, hearing loss, poisoning, fainting, no physical or psychological injuries; includes all records where nature code was reported as “unclassified”, the code was not reported on the First Report of Injury, or the code could not be converted to IAIABC codes.

Other Benefits Code: A code that identifies the type of other benefits paid to date or recovered for an injury or occupational disease. The following are IAIABC code definitions:

Funeral Expenses Paid to Date: Sum of the funeral expenses for this claim.

Insurers Legal Expense Paid to Date: Sum of the employer’s legal expenses paid for this claim.

Total Payments to Physicians: Sum of services paid to physicians for this claim.

Hospital Costs Paid to Date: Sum of costs of both inpatient and outpatient services which the injured employee received because of the work related injury.

Other Medical Paid to Date: Sum of medical costs not included in payments to physicians or hospital costs, i.e. laboratory tests, prescriptions.

Vocational Rehabilitation Evaluation Expense Paid to Date: Sum of vocational rehabilitation evaluation services (testing and evaluating the claimant’s ability, aptitude, or attitude in determining suitability for vocational rehabilitation or placement) for this claim.

Vocational Rehabilitation Education Paid to Date: Sum of vocational rehabilitation education payments (including tuition, books, tools, transportation and additional living expenses) for this claim.

Other Vocational Rehabilitation Education Paid to Date: Sum of vocational rehabilitation services not otherwise reported for this claim.

Consultant/Expert Witness Fees Paid to Date by Insurer: Sum of fees paid to expert witnesses (in a legal proceeding for expert testimony or opinion) for this claim.

Employer's Deductibles Recovery: Sum of monies recovered through Insured reimbursement of deductible amounts for this claim.

Subrogation Recovery: Sum of monies recovered through subrogation for this claim.

Overpayment Recovery: Sum of monies recovered due to overpayment of indemnity, medical or expenses for a claim.

Unspecified Recovery: Sum of monies recovered through salvage, apportionment/contribution, and all others not otherwise defined for a claim.

Part of Body Code: The code which correspond to the part of body to which the employee sustained injury or occupational disease. The IAIABC code definitions for part of body are divided into nine categories. A tenth category was reported as "All Other Claims, NOC", was created to account for the records that did not have a part of body code entered.

Head: Includes skull, brain, ear, eye, nose teeth mouth soft tissue, facial bones and multiple head injuries.

Neck: Includes vertebrae, disc, spinal cord, larynx, soft tissue, trachea and multiple neck injury.

Upper Extremity: Includes shoulder, elbow, upper arm, lower arm, hand, fingers and thumb; does not include hand and wrist or just wrist injuries.

Wrist: Includes hand and wrist or just wrist injuries.

Trunk: Includes chest, ribs, sternum, sacrum and coccyx, pelvis, spinal cord, internal organs, heart, lungs, buttocks and abdomen; does not include the upper or lower back, disc or lumbar and sacral vertebrae.

Back: Includes the upper and lower back, disc, or lumbar and sacral vertebrae.

Lower Extremity: Includes hip, upper leg, lower leg, ankle, foot and toe.

Knee

Multiple Parts: Includes multiple body parts or body systems.

All Other Claims, NOC: Includes all records where the part of body code was reported as "unclassified", the code was not reported on the First Report of Injury, or the code could not be converted to IAIABC codes.

Occupational Injury: A cut, fracture, sprain, amputation, or other physical harm, which results from a work accident on a single day or during a single work shift.

Occupational Disease (OD): Harm or damage caused by work-related events that occur on more than a single day or work shift. It includes acute chronic illnesses or diseases caused by inhalation, absorption, ingestion, or overuse syndrome.

Permanent Partial Disability (PPD): Permanent impairment resulting from an injury, after achieving maximum medical improvement, that impairs the worker's ability to work and causes an actual wage loss.

Permanent Total Disability (PTD): A physical condition resulting from an injury or occupational disease, after achieving maximum medical improvement, in which the worker has no reasonable prospect of physically performing regular employment.

Plan Type: The type of workers' compensation insurance coverage chosen by an employer. There are three different types of insurance plans:

Plan 1: Self-insurance provided by employers who have sufficient financial strength to cover potential workers' compensation claims. If an injury occurs, a self-insured employer will pay the expenses and benefits.

Plan 2: Insurance coverage provided by a private insurance company.

Plan 3: Insurance coverage provided by the Montana State Compensation Insurance Fund (State Fund).

Professional Employer Organizations (PEOs): Professional employer organizations provide human resource services for small to medium size businesses. Examples of services provided by PEOs are staffing, securing unemployment and workers' compensation insurance, and handling payroll taxes and medical benefits. PEOs must be licensed by the Department of Labor and Industry prior to supplying workers to client companies in Montana.

Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) Codes: Codes used to categorize employers by industry. The codes are published by the Federal Office of Management and Budget and can be found in the 1987 Standard Industrial Classification Manual. The codes are grouped into ten different industrial divisions, as listed below with examples of each division.

Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing (AFF): Includes establishments primarily engaged in agricultural production, forestry, commercial fishing, hunting, trapping, and related services.

Mining: Includes all establishments engaged in the extraction of minerals occurring naturally, and also includes quarrying, well operations, milling, and other preparation customarily done at the mine site, or as a part of mining activity. Exploration and development of mineral properties are included.

Construction: Includes establishments performing new work, additions, alterations, reconstruction, installations, and repairs. Three broad types of construction activity are covered: building construction by general contractors, heavy construction other than building by general contractors, and construction activity by other special trade contractors.

Manufacturing: Includes establishments engaged in the mechanical and chemical transformation of materials or substances into new products. These establishments are usually described as plants, factories, or mills and characteristically use power driven machines and materials handling equipment. Establishments engaged in assembling component parts of manufactured products are also considered manufacturing if the new product is neither a structure nor other fixed improvement. Also included is the blending of materials, such as lubricating oils, plastic resins, or liquors.

Transportation, Communication, and Public Utilities (TCPU): Includes establishments providing to the general public, or to other business enterprises, passenger and freight transportation, communications services, or electricity, gas, steam, water, or sanitary services, and all establishments of the United States Postal Service.

Wholesale Trade: Includes establishments or places of business primarily engaged in selling merchandise to retailers, to industrial, commercial, institutional, farm, construction contractors, or professional business users, or to other wholesale; or acting as agents or brokers in buying merchandise for or selling merchandise to such persons or companies.

Retail Trade: Includes establishments engaged in selling merchandise for personal or household consumption and rendering services incidental to the sale of the goods.

Finance, Insurance and Real Estate (FIRE): Finance includes depository institutions, non-depository credit institutions, holding companies, other investment companies, brokers and dealers in securities and commodity contracts, and security and commodity exchanges. Insurance covers carriers of all types of insurance, and insurance agents and brokers. Real

estate includes owners, lessors, lessees, buyers, sellers, agents, and developers of real estate. Establishments primarily engaged in the construction of buildings for sale are classified in Construction.

Services: Includes establishments primarily engaged in providing a wide variety of services for individuals, business or government establishments, and other organizations such as, hotels and other lodging places; establishments providing personal, business, repair, and amusement services; health, legal, engineering, and other professional services; educational institutions; and membership organizations.

Public Administration: Includes the executive, legislative, judicial, administrative and regulatory activities of federal, state and local governments.

Subsequent Report: A lost time report that gives indemnity information at specific intervals on an injured worker. The report gives the date benefit payments begin, paid amounts by benefit type, and case progress information.

Temporary Partial Disability (TPD): A physical condition resulting from an injury, prior to achieving maximum medical improvement, that causes a partial loss of wages.

Temporary Total Disability (TTD): A physical condition resulting from an injury or occupational disease, prior to achieving maximum medical improvement, that causes a total loss of wages.

Methodology

Occupational Disease and Injury Data

All injury data included in this report are gathered from the First Report of Injury. The form is completed and submitted to the Employment Relations Division (ERD) by employees, employers, or insurers. The form includes mandatory fields on the worker, accident description, employer & insurer. Non-mandatory fields such as gender, birth date, and hire date are often left blank. Limiting the number of mandatory fields was the balance achieved to ensure the value of the information was commensurate with the cost of collection. Because this report uses non-mandatory data, subcategories shown in the various tables may not add up to the total number of records because inaccurate or missing data were omitted.

This report includes all injuries reported to ERD; however, all injuries occurring in Montana may not have been reported.

Year-to-Year Comparisons

Whenever possible the data is presented with a comparison between FY98, FY99, FY00, FY01 and FY02.

Subsequent Report Data

All payment and duration data included in the Benefits Reports on Closed Claims section of this report are gathered from the Subsequent Report of Injury or settlement petitions approved by ERD. The Subsequent Report form is completed for each individual indemnity claim and submitted to ERD by adjusters or insurers. The form includes fields such as claimant identification information, status of the claim, type of benefits paid, benefit payment amounts and duration of benefits.

The payment and duration information contained in this report represents the average reported on indemnity claims only. Payments made on medical only claims are not included in the averages. To allow for comparison, whenever possible the information is grouped by type of disability, type of benefit payment, and date of injury or occupational disease.

The data includes information reported to ERD on injury and occupational disease claims closed or settled from July 1, 1997 through June 30, 2002. Subsequent Reports may not have been submitted to ERD for all indemnity claims.

Industry Divisions

To allow for comparison, whenever possible, the information is grouped by industry division. Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) Codes are used for this purpose. The SIC information is an optional field and may not be provided. Consequently, SIC Codes are missing in several places and are marked as "NOC - Not Otherwise Classified" on the graphs.

Data Sources

Workers' Compensation Database

The database system was built at the request of the legislature to provide management information. Employers, insurers, attorneys, medical providers, and other parties of the workers' compensation community in Montana provide data for the system.

Hearings Bureau

The Department of Labor and Industry, Hearings Bureau, provided Contested Case Hearings data.

Workers' Compensation Court

Workers' Compensation Court data were provided by the Court, which is administratively attached to the Department of Labor and Industry.

Department of Labor and Industry, Workers' Compensation Regulation Bureau

The Workers' Compensation Regulation Bureau provided data for the following sections of the report: Plan 1 Gross Annual Payroll, Plan 2 and 3 premium dollars, Professional Employer Organizations (PEOs), Indemnity and Medical Benefits, Subsequent Injury Fund, and Managed Care Organizations (MCOs), Uninsured Employers' Fund, and Independent Contractor Exemptions.

Department of Labor and Industry, Mediation Unit

The Mediation Unit of the DLI, Employment Relations Division, provided mediation section data.

Department of Labor and Industry, Safety and Health Bureau

The Safety and Health Bureau of the Employment Relations Division provided safety section data.

Regulatory Costs and Industrial Accident Rehabilitation Trust Fund Expenses

These costs were obtained from the State's Accounting, Budgeting and Human Resource System (SABHRS).

Contracted Services

Insurance Services Office, Inc.

Insurance Services Office, Inc. (ISO) is the leading supplier of statistical, actuarial, and underwriting information for and about the property/casualty insurance industry. ISO is a recent entrant into the workers' compensation field and provides data analysis to the Employment Relations Division on a contract basis.

Future Annual Reports

If you have suggestions or comments about this annual report, please share them with us. We are most interested in discovering anything that will make this report more useful to Montanans in general and the workers' compensation system in particular. You may direct your comments to:

Carol Gleed, Acting Chief
Claims Assistance Bureau
DLI, Employment Relations Division
P.O. Box 8011
Helena, MT 59601-8011

Phone: (406) 444-1574
FAX: (406) 444-4140
Email: cgleed@state.mt.us

Internet Site

This report and previous reports are available on the Internet at the following web site:

<http://erd.dli.state.mt.us/WorkCompClaims/WCChome.htm>

Special Studies Available

- The Effect of Apportionment and Capping on Occupational Disease Claims –
*A study requested by the Montana Department of Labor & Industry,
Employment Division and conducted by Insurance Service Offices, Inc.*
- Attorney Fee Supplement to Settlement Attorney Fees
- Occupational Injuries/Illnesses, by Age & Gender
- Occupational Injuries/Illnesses, by County